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Letter dated 6 November 2001 from the Chargé d'affaires a.i. of the Permanent Mission of the Syrian Arab Republic to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

With reference to the letter dated 25 October 2001 addressed to you by the Permanent Representative of Israel (A/56/507-S/2001/1012), I should like to inform you that the Government of the Syrian Arab Republic rejects in their entirety the sophistries and distortions of fact that it contains. It wishes to state as follows:

1. Any talk of international law, Security Council resolutions and peace coming from Israel lacks all credibility, because Israel is pursuing a policy of genocide directed against the Palestinian people as the world listens and looks on. The massacres it committed at Dayr Yasin, Qibyah, Sabra and Shatilla, and Qana are only a few examples of Israel's involvement in State terrorism. The Israeli occupation of Palestinian and Syrian territories that has been maintained for more than 34 years is manifest proof of Israel's antagonism to peace and the resolutions that embody international legitimacy, which are to be regarded as an integral whole. Israel therefore has no right to continue disseminating its lies and its odd, contorted and unacceptable interpretations of the resolutions of the United Nations and its organs.

2. Israel, which embraces State terrorism as its mode of action and its established policy, is trying to promote its own concepts of terrorism and its perverse understanding of Security Council resolution 1373 (2001). It is Israel itself that refuses to comply with Security Council resolutions 242 (1967) and 338 (1973) requiring its full withdrawal from the occupied Arab territories. Israel insists on ignoring these resolutions, which embody international legitimacy, while every country in the world acknowledges that it is impossible to achieve a just and comprehensive peace in the region without their implementation. In addition to the enforcement of rightful claims, these resolutions also aim at achieving security and stability. The Israeli occupation of Arab territories, as well as representing flagrant aggression and the usurpation of national rights, is also organized terrorism and indeed the highest degree of terrorism by any legal or criminal standard.

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3. The Israeli scheme to distort Security Council resolution 1373 (2001) is a malicious attempt to deprive the resolution of its true substance. In practice, Israel is demanding in its aforesaid letter that the international community should join it in killing, assassinating and slaughtering more Palestinians, Lebanese and Syrians, in demolishing homes, in uprooting civilians and in destroying the environment. We firmly believe that Israel's interpretations of this resolution are the greatest danger to the mobilization of the international community to implement th resolution in the context of eliminating international terrorism in all its forms and manifestations. It must here be stressed that it is Israel that brought terrorism to the Middle East and that has practised it from its foundation up to the present time. There are a number of its leaders who are being asked to appear before international tribunals, having committed numerous terrorist acts.

4. The Syrian Arab Republic expresses its solidarity with Lebanon in its struggle to regain all of its occupied territory, and it is committed to the resolutions of the Arab Summit Conference and the Council of the League of Arab States that support Lebanon and its people. In its resolution 6115 of 10 September 2001 (S/2001/957, annex), the Council of the League:

> "Strongly condemns Israel, which continues to occupy Lebanese territory and positions on the Lebanese frontier, still detains Lebanese in its prisons, refuses to hand over to the United Nations all the maps indicating the location of mines laid by the forces of occupation and continues to infringe the sovereignty of Lebanon on land, at sea and in the air; [and] denounces the Israeli attacks and threats against Lebanon and Syria ... ."

5. The Syrian Arab Republic affirms that it is interested in combating all forms of terrorism and in eliminating its sources and roots by means of international cooperation within the framework of the United Nations with a view to achieving tangible results in the suppression of this international bane.

6. The Syrian Arab Republic responded to the other Israeli allegations made here in the annex to document A/55/926-S/2001/438 of 3 May 2001.

I should be grateful if you would have this letter circulated as a document of the General Assembly, under agenda item 166, and of the Security Council.

(*Signed*) Fayssal **Mekdad**
Chargé d'affaires a.i.